

## Message Text

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TAGS: ETRN, UR, US

SUBJECT: CIVAIR: PANAM CHARTERS

REF: A. MOSCOW 9355; B. MOSCOW 9354; C. STATE 154766

1. SUMMARY. DEPUTY FOREIGN RELATIONS CHIEF AKSENOV OF CIVIL AVIATION MINISTRY CALLED IN EMBOFF AUGUST 8 TO EXPLAIN THAT MINISTRY HAD NOT INITIALLY DISAPPROVED CHICAGO - MOSCOW - CHICAGO CHARTER APPLICATION BUT HAD ONLY SOUGHT DISCUSSION OF ONE ASPECT OF REQUEST WITH LOCAL PANAM OFFICE. ASPECT OF CONCERN HAD BEEN NOT THE US POINT OF ORIGIN BUT THE EUROPEAN INTERMEDIARY STOPS. DESPITE THIS CONCERN, CHARTER HAD BEEN APPROVED AS GESTURE TOWARD GETTING COOPERATION UNDER AGREED MINUTE OFF TO A GOOD START. GENERAL QUESTION OF EUROPEAN STOPS REMAINED TO BE SETTLED. AKSENOV CRITICIZED ALLEGED PENCHANT OF PANAM REP TO ESCALATE ALL PROBLEMS TO DIPLOMATIC LEVEL AND MADE A PLEA FOR IMPROVED COMMUNICATION BETWEEN PANAM MOSCOW OFFICE AND CIVIL AVIATION OFFICIALS. END SUMMARY.

2. M.I. LYUBIMOV OF CIVIL AVIATION MINISTRY'S FOREIGN RELATIONS ADMINISTRATION INVITED EMBOFF AUGUST 8 TO MEET WITH HIM AND K.A. AKSENOV, DEPUTY CHIEF OF FOREIGN RELATIONS ADMINISTRATION, TO RECEIVE "ORAL STATEMENT" OF SOVIET POSITION ON PANAM CHARTER REQUESTS.

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3. AT MEETING LATER SAME DAY, AKSENOV STATED AVIATION

MINISTRY HAD INFORMED PANAM MOSCOW REP CORNING BY PHONE AUGUST 6 OF FOLLOWING DISPOSITION OF THREE CHARTER FLIGHT REQUESTS SUBMITTED BY CORNING JULY 30: A) NEW YORK-MOSCOW AND RETURN WOULD BE APPROVED; B) LONDON-MOSCOW "EXTRA SECTION" WOULD BE REFUSED; C) ON CHICAGO-MOSCOW AND RETURN CHARTER, NO DECISION YET MADE AND MINISTRY WISHED TO DISCUSS QUESTION WITH CORNING. ACCORDING TO LYUBIMOV, WHO SPOKE WITH CORNING, LATTER SAID HE WOULD BE LEAVING MOSCOW EARLY FOLLOWING DAY AND WANTED SIMPLE YES OR NO ANSWER.

4. AKSENOV SAID HE WAS DISTRESSED THAT MINISTRY'S ACTION ON CHICAGO CHARTER REQUEST HAD BEEN REPORTED TO PANAM HEAD OFFICE, AND THENCE TO DEPARTMENT, NOT ONLY AS A REFUSAL, BUT AS ONE APPARENTLY BASED ON FACT THAT US POINT OF ORIGIN WAS OT ON AGREED REGULAR SERVICES. SUCH A REFUSAL WOULD HAVE BEEN CONTRARY TO AGREED MINUTE ON CHARTER FLIGHTS, BY WHICH, AKSENOV SAID, SOVIETS INTEND TO ABIDE.

5. PROBLEM WITH CHICAGO-MOSCOW-CHICAGO CHARTER PROPOSAL, AKSENOV SAID, HAD BEEN THAT IT HAD CALLED FOR INTERMEDIATE STOPS AT OSLO AND COPENHAGEN (IN CONTRAST TO REQUESTED NEW YORK-MOSCOW-NEW YORK CHARTER, WHICH INVOLVED DIRECT FLIGHT IN BOTH DIRECTIONS). PANAM, HOWEVER, IS AUTHORIZED ONLY TWO INTERMEDIARY POINTS EACH SEASON ON ITS FLIGHTS TO THE SOVIET UNION, AND IT HAS ALREADY DESIGNATED BRUSSELS AS ONE OF THESE FOR THE CURRENT SEASON. IT WAS ABOUT THIS, AKSENOV CONTINUED, THAT CIVIL AVIATION OFFICIALS HAD WISHED TO TALK WITH CORNING. IN INTEREST OF GETTING US-SOVIET COOPERATION UNDER AGREED MINUTE OFF TO A GOOD START, THEY HAD GONE AHEAD AND APPROVED CHICAGO-MOSCOW CHARTER, BUT PROBLEM OF INTERMEDIATE EUROPEAN POINTS REMAINED TO BE RESOLVED. AS A FIRST STEP, HE SAID, PANAM SHOULD DESIGNATE A SECOND EUROPEAN POINT FOR THIS SEASON. ADDITIONAL INTERMEDIATE POINTS COULD BE AGREED UPON BUT ONLY ON BASIS OF RECIPROCITY. A LIST OF AGREED-UPON INTERMEDIATE POINTS FOR CARRIERS OF BOTH PARTIES MIGHT EVEN BE APPENDED TO THE MINUTE. (COMMENT: SINCE INTERMEDIATE STOPS ON CHARTER FLIGHTS ARE, WE UNDERSTAND, ONLY FOR FUELING AND LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PROVISIONING, IT IS NOT CLEAR TO US WHY SOVIETS SHOULD ATTACH TO THIS QUESTION THE IMPORTANCE THEY SEEM TO. END COMMENT.)

6. DISAPPROVED LONDON-MOSCOW FLIGHT, AKSENOV EXPLAINED, COULD QUALIFY NEITHER AS A TRUE "EXTRA SECTION," SINCE REGULAR SERVICE IS THROUGH BRUSSELS, NOR AS A CHARTER COVERED BY THE AGREED MINUTE (WHICH EMBOFF ACKNOWLEDGED),

SINCE IT WAS NOT BETWEEN THE US AND THE USSR BUT, LIKE THE DISAPPROVED MAT INC. FLIGHT (REF B), BETWEEN THE USSR AND A THIRD COUNTRY. MIDWAY THROUGH MEETING WITH EMBOFF,

AKSENOV WAS HANDED REVISED "EXTRA SECTION" REQUEST FROM PANAM PROPOSING NEW YORK-LONDON-MOSCOW, WITH CHANGE OF GUAGE AT LONDON, IN LIEU OF SIMPLY LONDON-MOSCOW. AKSENOV POINTED OUT THAT THIS STILL COULD NOT BE REGARDED AS TRUE EXTRA SECTION. (LATER IN THE DAY, ACTION PANAM REP INFORMED EMBASSY THAT MINISTRY HAD NOTIFIED HIM THAT REQUEST WOULD BE APPROVED BUT THAT THIS WAS BEING DONE ON "EX-CEPTIONAL" BASIS, PURSUANT TO DISCUSSION WITH EMBOFF AND TO HIS ASSURANCE THAT "SUCH A REQUEST" WOULD NOT BE REPEATED--AN ASSURANCE WHICH HAD NEITHER BEEN SOUGHT NOR GIVEN.)

7. AKSENOV UNBURDENED HIMSELF OF GENERAL DISSATISFACTION WITH STATE OF COMMUNICATIONS BETWEEN MINISTRY AND PANAM MOSCOW OFFICE. HE CITED, AS SMALL EXAMPLE, FACT THAT MINISTRY HAD LEARNED OF CORNING'S IMMINENT ABSENCE ON LEAVE ONLY A DAY BEFORE HIS DEPARTURE. AKSENOV SAID EACH PARTY HAD HAD PROBLEMS WITH THE OTHER BUT THAT MATTERS COULD BE IMPROVED BY TALKING TO ONE ANOTHER. CORNING'S HABIT, HOWEVER, WAS TO ESCALATE EVERY PROBLEM TO HOME OFFICE AND THEN TO GOVERNMENT-TO-GOVERNMENT LEVEL. (COMMENT: VIEW ACUTE FRUSTRATIONS PANAM HAS SUFFERED HERE OVER THE YEARS, ASSIGNMENT OF BLAME FOR POOR STATE OF COMMUNICATIONS TO CORNING ALONE IS HARDLY FAIR. NEVERTHELESS, AKSENOV DID SEEM TO BE MAKING SERIOUS APPEAL FOR AN IMPROVED DIALOGUE BETWEEN MINISTRY AND PANAM MOSCOW OFFICE. END COMMENT.)

8. EMBOFF TOLD AKSENOV THAT HE REGRETTED APPARENT MIS-UNDERSTANDING ON CHICAGO-MOSCOW CHARTER, THAT HE APPRE-LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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CIATED AKSENOV'S EFFORT TO CLARIFY THE MATTER, AND THAT THIS AND OTHER SUBJECTS DISCUSSED WOULD BE REPORTED TO DEPARTMENT.

9. EMBASSY HAS INFORMED ACTING MANAGER OF PANAM OFFICE (VAESSEN) OF GIST OF PARAS 3-6 ABOVE AND OF AKSENOV'S GENERAL PLEA FOR IMPROVED COMMUNICATIONS. DUBS

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